

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant submits this Amendment After Final (“Amendment”) in reply to the Final Office Action (“Office Action”) mailed March 22, 2006. In this Amendment, Applicant proposes to amend claims 20 and 32 and cancel claims 29 and 32. Before entry of this Amendment, claims 20-55 were pending. After entry of this Amendment claims 20-28, 30, and 32-55 are pending.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 20-27, 29, and 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,138,307 to Rost; rejected claim 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rost in view of U.S. Patent 4,010,058 to Kubinski et al.; rejected claim 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rost and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,547,251 to Landsness; and rejected claims 34-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rost in view of at least one of U.S. Patent No. 4,131,500 to Wilde et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,645,828 to Balle et al., and U.S. Patent No. 4,362,592 to Ruppel.

In addition, the Examiner objected to claims 31 and 32 but stated that these claims “would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims” (Office Action, page 2, ¶ 6), and allowed claims 38-55.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner’s indication of allowable subject matter in claims 31, 32, and 38-55.

At the outset, Applicant proposes to amend claim 20 to incorporate the subject matter previously recited in claims 29 and 31, and proposes to amend claim 32 to depend from claim 20, as opposed to claim 31.

Applicant respectfully traverses the above-noted rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. In order to expedite prosecution of this application, however, Applicant has amended independent claim 20 to incorporate subject matter of objected to claim 31. Claim 31 has been canceled, as well as claim 29 (which itself depends directly from claim 20) in order to maintain antecedent basis. Claim 32, as noted above, has also been amended to depend from claim 20, in light of the cancellation of claim 31. Claims 38-55, as further noted above, have been allowed by the Examiner.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that their proposed claim amendments do not raise new issues requiring further consideration or search and place the present application in condition for allowance. Entry of this Amendment After Final and timely issuance of a Notice of Allowability are earnestly requested.

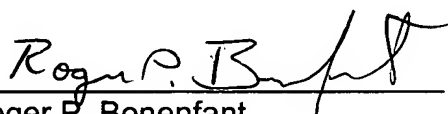
In discussing the claims in this Amendment, it is to be understood that Applicant is in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification or abstract and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicant believes that Applicant is entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 24, 2006

By: 
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